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Director of Central Intelligence

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

OCO/Cable Editors

EO 13526
3.5(c)
NR

National Intelligence Daily (Cable)

14 May 1982

~~Top Secret~~

CPAS NIDC 82-113C

14 May 1982

3.5(c)

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SPECIAL ANALYSES

ARGENTINA: President Galtieri's Prospects

3.5(c) [redacted]

//President Galtieri's personal standing with the military has eroded since the onset of the crisis, but the hostilities have temporarily united the embattled armed services.

3.3(b)(1) [redacted]

The President's survival hinges on the progress he makes toward international recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the Falklands. Discernible gains would strengthen his hold on power but an impasse would make the turnover of greater authority to civilians increasingly likely. Any successor regime would feel compelled to make the US the scapegoat for Argentina's defeat. [redacted] 3.5(c)

[redacted]

[redacted]

The Army, as the most powerful service, will determine any military succession. [redacted] 3.5(c)

Possible Successors

//If Galtieri falters before the crisis is resolved, he could be replaced by one of several key corps commanders who would have to back any coup attempt. [redacted] 3.3(b)(1)

3.3(b)(1) [redacted]

He disapproves of the President's concessions to civilians and distrusts his goals. Trimarco could be tempted to try to seize power before he reaches mandatory retirement age at the end of next year.//

3.5(c) [redacted]

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//General Nicolaides, who commands a major corps centered in Buenos Aires, is interested in assuming Galtieri's military post. General Guanabens Perello, who commands the III Corps in the important industrial center of Cordoba, has criticized Galtieri's handling of the crisis.[redacted] 3.5(c)

//Any plotter would have to be concerned, however, that a coup at this juncture would demoralize Argentine troops, and possibly split the military. In addition, if political and military defeat seem likely, a would-be successor probably would choose to saddle Galtieri with the onus before moving against him.[redacted] 3.5(c)

The Next Regime

//A coup in the wake of major military setbacks probably would not lead to immediate policy changes. Most potential successors are--like Galtieri--dedicated nationalists and ideological hardliners. Moreover, any effort to build support against Galtieri would have to avoid the appearance of treason by being labeled as corrections of tactical blunders rather than a backing off from the British challenge.[redacted] 3.5(c)

//A successor regime headed by armed forces officers--even if it took over after hostilities end--probably would be unable to rule with the authority of previous governments. Civilians would demand policy changes or participation in government in exchange for their backing of the military.[redacted] 3.5(c)

//A purely civilian administration or, alternatively, a highly authoritarian military regime also could emerge. The probable disarray in the ranks of both political and military institutions, however, makes a transitional arrangement moving toward elections a more likely alternative.[redacted] 3.5(c)

//If a civilian framework emerges, the Peronists--because of their numerical and political importance--probably would carve out a large share of power.[redacted] 3.5(c)

A Difficult Balancing Act

//Clear military or diplomatic gains would end immediate threats to Galtieri's regime. Senior officers, despite their distrust of Galtieri's judgment and ambi-

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tions, would back his bid to remain as commander in chief beyond his scheduled retirement at the end of the year.// 3.5(c)

//Labor and political leaders, faced with appeals to national solidarity, would be forced to continue their support--at least in the short run. This would be especially true if a cease-fire was followed by lengthy negotiations. 3.5(c)

//Such "support" for Galtieri, however, would continue to rest on divergent objectives. Labor and political leaders would argue for a shift away from liberal economic policies, increased access to decisionmaking, and an accelerated schedule for elections. Hardline military officers, on the other hand, probably would remain suspicious of civilian leaders and call for an economic stabilization program. 3.5(c)

//In the medium term, Galtieri would be able to use his personal appeal and any "victory" he can claim in the conflict to keep both sides in check. Over the longer term, however, his ability to manage the economic problems created by the crisis will largely determine his fate. 3.5(c)

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